



Attorney General Jon Bruning

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 18, 2009, 3:50 p.m.

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## **Attorney General Bruning and Senators Lautenbaugh and White Applaud Passage of Child Protection Bill**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning today applauded the Legislature's passage of LB 97. The bill protects Nebraska's children from Internet sex predators and expands the crime of online enticement to include communications through electronic devices other than computers, like cell phones. The bill also makes it illegal for registered sex offenders who prey upon children to use social-networking sites.

The Attorney General's Office partnered with Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh and Sen. Tom White on the legislation.

"I'm proud of the fact that this is nonpartisan legislation. The Child Protection Bill is about keeping Nebraska's children safe and that's an issue where we stand united," said Bruning. "This bill protects our kids by giving law enforcement and prosecutors additional tools to effectively combat those who prey on the innocent. This bill matters to Nebraskans."

There is never a shortage of online predators preying on children. According to a Federal Bureau of Prison study, 76 percent of offenders convicted of Internet-related crimes against children also admitted to sexually assaulting children.

Sen. Lautenbaugh said, "Technology plays a big part in our lives these days, and sadly has allowed sexual predators to change how they operate. LB 97 gives our law enforcement officials the ability to keep up with these changes. I am proud to have worked with the Attorney General and my colleagues to keep our children safe online and off."

Sen. White said, "This bill is the product of bipartisan collaboration. It gives parents tools to keep their children safe online while strengthening penalties for those who would do them harm."

The Child Protection Bill also:

- Adds Enticement by Electronic Communication Device to the list of registerable offenses.
- Requires offenders to share information with law enforcement about their online aliases and social networking sites where their profiles already exist as a condition of sex offender registration.

- Enhances penalties for producing, manufacturing, trafficking and possessing child porn.
  - possession - from class IV felony (0-5 years) to class III (1-20 years)
  - manufacture and distribution – from class III felony (1-20 years) to class ID (3-50 years)
  - possession with intent to distribute – class IIIA felony (0-5 years) to class III (1-20 years)
- Makes sexual penetration committed by a person 25 or older against a victim who is between 12 and 15 a class 1B felony with a mandatory minimum 15 years in prison for a first offense.
- Allows prosecutors to introduce information about an offender's previous sexual misconduct.
- Removes the statute of limitations on crimes of incest.

Protecting children from Internet predators has been a priority for Attorney General Bruning. In the past, his office has worked with Sens. Thompson and Friend to create the offense of online enticement, pass cyberstalking legislation, and LB 1199 which stiffened penalties for criminals who prey on children, imposed tougher registration requirements on sex offenders and enabled prosecutors to commit sexually-violent predators to mental health facilities at the end of their sentence.

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